

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7415

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MUNICH 2033

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: EIND, TECH, TGEN

SUBJECT: MAGNETIC BUBBLE TECHNOLOGY

REF: STATE 198501

1. THIS CABLE IS IN RESPONSE TO REFTEL REQUESTING INFORMATION IN SUPPORT OF PROJECT C-I-6-50287.
2. OVER THE PAST THREE WEEKS POST HAS HELD SEVERAL DISCUSSIONS WITH VARIOUS ELEMENTS OF SIEMENS. MAJOR SOURCES OF INFORMATION WERE: (A) DR. WOLF JOHNSSEN, DIRECTOR, STRATEGIC PLANNING, SEMICONDUCTOR DIVISION; AND (B) DR. KLAUS HAUSMANN, MANAGER, FOREIGN OPERATIONS.
3. DURING INTERVIEW WITH JOHNSSEN, WE WERE TOLD THAT SIEMENS IS CURRENTLY DEVELOPING THEIR OWN MAGNETIC BUBBLE MEMORY DEVICE (MBD), USING GARNET AS THE BASIC MATERIAL. 1-K AND 4-K DEVICES HAVE BEEN PRODUCED FOR LABORATORY USE, BUT NO PILOT PRODUCTION IS IN PROGRESS. COOPERATION IN THIS FIELD INCLUDES AN EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND ENGINEERS BETWEEN SIEMENS AND PLESSEY OF ENGLAND. ACCORDING TO JOHNSSEN, THIS EXCHANGE IS EXPECTED TO CONTINUE. JOHNSSEN ALSO NOTED THAT SIEMENS HAS HAD LONG STANDING (SINCE 1923) TECHNICAL EXCHANGE AGREEMENT WITH FUJITSU, TOKYO, JAPAN, IN ELECTRONICS FIELD. HE FLATELY REFUSED

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TO ELABORATE.

4. DR. JOHNSSEN COMMENTED THAT MAGNETIC BUBBLE DEVICES ARE LOOKED ON BY SIEMENS AS MORE OR LESS "BLUE SKY RESEARCH PROJECTS", DUE TO THE CURRENT LACK OF GOOD APPLICATIONS FOR THEM EVEN IF MBDS ARE PERFECTED IN NEXT TWO OR THREE YEARS. HE FORESAW LITTLE NEED FOR LARGE MEMORY STORAGE CAPABILITY THAT COULD BE GENERATED. HE INTIMATED THAT SUBSTANTIAL MANUFACTURING PROBLEMS EXIST WHICH GREATLY LOWER COST EFFECTIVENESS OF DEVICES. HE IMPLIED THAT, NONETHELESS, SIEMENS WOULD CONTINUE ITS DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS IN MBD TECHNOLOGY. IT WAS NOTED THAT MUCH (NO EXACT FIGURES AVAILABLE, BUT PROBABLY LESS THAN HALF) OF FUNDING FOR PROJECT WAS SUPPLIED BY MINISTRY OF RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY.

5. DR. HAUSMAN, CONFIRMED DIRECTLY OR BY IMPLICATION, THE BROAD THRUST OF JOHNSSEN'S STATEMENTS. HAUSMANN FURTHER EMPHASIZED CLOSE COOPERATION BETWEEN FUJITSU AND SIEMENS (A REFLECTION IN PART OF HAUSMANN'S RECENT EXPERIENCE AS HEAD OF ALL SIEMENS' OPERATIONS IN JAPAN). HOWEVER, HAUSMANN DECLINED TO MAKE ANY DIRECT CONFIRMATION OR DENIAL OF SIEMENS INVOLVEMENT WITH ANY JAPANESE FIRM IN MBD FIELD.

6. FYI DEPARTMENT: DR. JOHNSSEN REPORTED THAT SIEMENS HAS TECHNICAL INTERCHANGE AGREEMENT WITH INTEL CORPORATION, SANTA CLARA, CALIFORNIA, FOR MANUFACTURE AND SALES OF 4-K MICROPROCESSORS, INCLUDING ROM AND RAM SYSTEMS. HE FORESEES CONTINUED COOPERATION WITH THE INTEL PEOPLE DURING NEXT FIVE TO TEN YEARS, INCLUDING CONTINUED WORK ON PRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF 8-K DEVICES. SIEMENS' OWN PEOPLE WILL WORK ON SALES AND APPLICATIONS OF THESE DEVICES, BUT PROBABLY WILL NOT PRODUCE THEIR OWN MODEL. THEY DO PLAN TO "SECOND SOURCE" SEVERAL "8080" CLASS DEVICES. END FYI.

7. COMMENT: REGRET THAT WE COULD NOT SECURE ANSWERS TO ALL QUESTIONS SET FORTH REFTEL. HOWEVER, AS DEPARTMENT AWARE, THIS IS INDEED A DELICATE SUBJECT. DR. HAUSMANN, WHOM WE CONSIDER TO BE POLICY-LEVEL SPOKES-
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MAN FOR SIEMENS, IS CLEARLY AWARE OF OUR INABILITY HERE TO GUARANTEE HOW INFORMATION WHICH HIS FIRM CONSIDERS TO BE EXTREMELY SENSITIVE WILL BE TREATED IN WASHINGTON. WHILE WE DID NOT DISCUSS THIS ASPECT DIRECTLY, THERE WAS NO NEED TO: DR. HAUSMANN OBVIOUSLY HAD NO INTENTION WHATSOEVER OF BEING DRAWN INTO MORE THAN THE MOST SUPERFICIAL COMMENTS CONCERNING HIS COMPANY'S PLANS OR CAPABILITIES IN THE MBD AREA. THIS BEING SO, WE

DO NOT INTEND TO PURSUE THE MATTER FURTHER, AS TO DO
SO WOULD RISK LOSING THE CONSIDERABLE GOOD WILL WHICH
WE HAVE BUILT UP WITH SIEMENS.BETTS

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